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organic character, the solidarity, of literature? Crude, negative, and perverse as the idea is in the form in which Plutarch presents it, still it anticipates in a way the modern notion that each element and type of the whole body of literature has its peculiar part to play in fashioning the soul of man. I do not know of any preceding statement of this thought. Plato comes very near to saying it in the *Gorgias*, and clearly recognizes the principle in his treatment of music in the *Republic* (3. 399), but he does not apply the thought to literature, so far as I recall. Perhaps some reader of this journal may be able to set me right in this matter.

Of minor errors the list is brief. (1) On p. 39 the date of Basil's death should be 379 instead of 279. (2) Several of the references to Aristotle's *Poetics* on pp. 52 and 53 are incorrect. (3) The practice of quoting, in the foot-notes, as on pp. 76 and 94, from dictionaries and encyclopædias, without giving the authorities for the quotations, is an editorial vice in which no scholar can safely indulge. (4) Now and then the foot-notes are inapt. Thus to illustrate Plutarch's observation (p. 53) that 'color in painting is more effective than line because more lifelike and illusive,' the editor quotes without comment the sentence from Aristotle's *Poetics*: 'The most beautiful colors, laid on confusedly, will not give as much pleasure as the chalk outline of a portrait.' The implication is that the thoughts of the two writers here run parallel, whereas in point of fact the two passages present a curious and complicated antithesis, the exposition of which would require an extended commentary.

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Shakspeare and his Forerunners: Studies in Elizabethan Poetry and its Development from Early English. By Sidney Lanier. Illustrated. Two Volumes. New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1902. Pp. xxiv, 324, and xix, 329.

The purpose of the following notice is to call attention to the value of this work for the literary study of Old English. The chapters which have to do with our earliest literature are these: II. The Supernatural in Early English and in Shakspeare. *Address of the Soul to the Dead Body* Compared with *Hamlet*. III. Nature in

Early English and in Shakspeare: *Beowulf* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*. IV. Some Birds of English Poetry: *The Phoenix* of Cynewulf and of Shakspeare. V. Women of English Poetry down to Shakspeare, *St. Juliana* and *Love's Labour's Lost*.

Here, too, it may be convenient to mention the numerous plates which add greatly to the interest of the volume. Among these are: Beginning of the 'Laws of Alfred,' Facsimile from a Saxon Chronicle, Facsimile of a Page of the Vercelli MS., Fall of the Bad Angel (from the 'Cædmon' MS.), Facsimile from the Anglo-Saxon MS. first mentioning the Story of King Alfred and the Cakes, A Page from the 'Bestiary Book,' From 'The Wonders of the East,' God Brings Light (from the 'Cædmon' MS.), Facsimile from the Codex Exoniensis with the Runic Alphabet, Adam and Eve Driven out of Paradise (from the 'Cædmon' MS.)

Shakspeare and his Forerunners consists of two sets of lectures delivered in Baltimore in 1879-80, one at the Johns Hopkins University and one at the Peabody Institute. The work has, with the exception of a few chapters recently published in magazines, remained in manuscript. It is now printed under the supervision of Mr. Henry Wysham Lanier, who professes to have confined his editorial labors entirely to 'selection and arrangement.' In view of this want of editing and of modernization, the 'scholarship' of the volume is such as would disgrace a recent work. Indeed, one who is acquainted with the author's *Science of English Verse* and its thousand errors of statement and of fact with respect to Old English will be surprised at nothing that he may encounter in a work obviously never prepared for the press; yet he may be permitted to wonder at the temerity of an editor who allows such verses as these to go into print:

Swiſe on naeshleaðum nicras liegan—*Beo.* 1427; Vol. 1, p. 66.

Ides ogloeceviſ, irmſe gemunde—*Beo.* 1259; Vol. 1, p. 55.

On ðram holmclife—*Beo.* 1421; Vol. 1, p. 50.

This list might be continued. The work is also disfigured by vague or erroneous statements. Even in 1879 one was hardly justified in implying that the entire *Exeter Book* was the work of Cynewulf. i. 76-77), or that the events of the *Beowulf* might possibly have taken place before the fifth century (i. 43-44).

But it would be a thankless task to list the errors in a book never intended by its author as a contribution to scholarship; it is far more profitable to turn one's attention to other features of the

volume. Noticeably good are the translations from Old English poetry (though they are often spoiled by inaccurate renderings). The principal piece of translation is from *The Phoenix*, nearly a third of that poem being translated into English prose and verse. There are also bits from the *Beowulf*, the *Elene*, the *Juliana*, and the *Soul to the Body*. The author's favorite verse—medium is the one illustrated by the following passage from the *Beowulf*—a medium unique in translations of Old English poetry, so far as the present writer's knowledge extends :

Weird is the land
Of their dwelling, and drear and dark ;
Wind-swept peaks and wolf-hills wild,
And perilous tarns where the arrowy torrents
Shoot sheerly down from the cliffs
And cleave through the earth.—1. 47.

Without being imitative of the original metres, these verses—and those from *The Phoenix*—have the variety, the life, and the color that are wanting in many of our translations from Old English. It is a pity that they contain so much inaccuracy.

But, after all, the principal feature of the chapters under discussion is their literary study of Old English—a study based on a comparison of the early poems with some Elizabethan—or even more modern work. From these comparisons the author is enabled to draw certain large distinctions between mediæval and modern literature. For example, on page 74 of vol. 1, we read : ‘ Since the poem of *Beowulf* was written the relations between man and Nature have changed in a wonderful and beautiful manner, so that whereas Nature was once a rigorous monster, a mother of Grendel, rending and devouring the sons of men, it has softened down into a Puck, in the *Midsommer Night's Dream*, who plays amazing, but not tragic, tricks in the domestic life.’

The merits and defects of this system of literary criticism are obvious : at its best it will bring home to us the continuity—the essential unity of our literature ; at its worst it will seem—as the passage cited seems to the present writer—far-fetched and fanciful. What is to prevent us, we may ask, from setting such a sentence as this from the *Beowulf* : ‘ A new year came into the dwellings of earth—as still it doth—and the days, gloriously bright, which ever observe the season due . . . Fair was the bosom of earth ’ (1133 ff.) over against Shakspeare's Caliban, or the ‘ rigorous monster ’ witches

in *Macbeth*, and deducing a conclusion precisely the opposite of Lanier's?

At their best, on the other hand, the comparisons are well worth making. It may seem somewhat startling at first to be asked to compare St. Juliana with Miss Gwendolen Harleth; but the device enables the author to enforce some very real likenesses between mediæval life and the life of the nineteenth century portrayed in *Daniel Deronda*: 'May it not be that they [people in 2879] will think Mrs. Lewes's story as foolish as you think Cynewulf's? . . . The truth is, when all's said and done, the devil who appeared to Juliana and urged her to worship the false gods was not one whit more superstitious or ridiculous than the arguments by which Gwendolen Harleth persuaded herself to marry Grandcourt. The one belongs as much to an age of darkness as the other' (1. 108-09). After all, before the worth of Old English literature can be said to have been duly tested, it must have been subjected to a searching comparison with other literatures; in so far as the chapters here discussed succeed in showing us a practicable method of relating our mediæval literature to our modern, they are not without a real value.

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Biblical Quotations in Old English Prose Writers, Second Series.

Edited with the Latin Originals, Index of Biblical Passages, and Index of Principal Words, by Albert S. Cook, Ph. D., L. H. D., Professor of the English Language and Literature in Yale University. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons; London: Edward Arnold, 1903. Pp. x, 396.

Students of Old English will be gratified to note the completion of Professor Cook's great collection of *Biblical Quotations in Old English Prose Writers*, the first part of which appeared in 1898. In its scope and method the second series follows the same lines as the first, so as to dispense us from a description of its general arrangement. The texts included in the present volume are (1) the remaining works of the Alfred cycle, namely the *Boethius*, Augustine's *Soliloquies* (quoted from Hargrove's edition of 1902), Gregory's *Dialogues* (made accessible through the Johnson-Hecht edition of